

New York allows online lockdown weddings

23rd April, 2020



New York Governor Andrew Cuomo has decided that people can still get married in New York despite the city being under lockdown. Governor Cuomo has signed a special executive order permitting people to get married online. All wedding ceremonies

had been halted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but special measures have been introduced to allow couples to tie the knot. The procedure for weddings under lockdown now entails applying for a marriage license online and having clerks conducting the ceremony virtually. Mr Cuomo said the new online weddings would be legally binding. A city official said: "The executive order will temporarily suspend a provision of law that requires in-person visits."

The new executive order means couples can get wed via video conferencing. This was previously not recognised as a legal way of getting married. Mr Cuomo joked to reporters that: "There is now no excuse when the question comes up for marriage. You can do it by Zoom." Mr Cuomo did not say whether Zoom was the only tele-conferencing platform that people could use on their happy day. The platform does allow guests to attend online. Stay-at-home measures have been extended in New York until at least the 15th of May. It could be months after that before social distancing measures are lifted. This means gatherings for events such as weddings may continue to be held online.

Sources: huffpost.com / bbc.com / aljazeera.com

Writing

Online weddings are just as good as traditional weddings. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

married / lockdown / special / executive / order / tie the knot / ceremony / online / couples / video conferencing / reporters / happy / guests / measures / gatherings

True / False

- a) The president of New York decided to allow people to marry online. T / F
- b) Only half of weddings are taking place in New York's churches. T / F
- c) New Yorkers must now apply for a marriage license online. T / F
- d) The online weddings in New York will be legally binding. T / F
- e) Couples can get married via video conferencing platforms. T / F
- f) New York's governor says New Yorkers have no excuse not to marry. T / F
- g) There is a limit to the number of guests allowed at online weddings. T / F
- h) A New York official said online weddings will end in two months. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. despite | a. stopped |
| 2. permitting | b. acknowledged |
| 3. halted | c. method |
| 4. procedure | d. get-togethers |
| 5. temporarily | e. letting |
| 6. previously | f. be present at |
| 7. recognised | g. formerly |
| 8. attend | h. widened |
| 9. extended | i. in spite of |
| 10. gatherings | j. for the time being |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What experiences do you have of video conferencing?
- c) How would you feel about getting married on Zoom?
- d) How can we help wedding businesses affected by the lockdown?
- e) What other events could be held online?
- f) What do you think of weddings?
- g) What will you do after the lockdown ends?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Governor Andrew Cuomo?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. despite the city | a. extended |
| 2. Cuomo has signed a special | b. the knot |
| 3. All wedding ceremonies had | c. binding |
| 4. allow couples to tie | d. of getting married |
| 5. online weddings would be legally | e. executive order |
| 6. couples can get | f. excuse |
| 7. a legal way | g. wed |
| 8. There is now no | h. being under lockdown |
| 9. Stay-at-home measures have been | i. measures |
| 10. social distancing | j. been halted |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think a lockdown wedding would be like?
- How sad is it people have to get married online?
- Would you wait until after the lockdown has ended to get married?
- Should any wedding be allowed online?
- Do you think online weddings will be normal in the future?
- What is the best way of tying the knot?
- How could an online wedding be different from a traditional one?
- What do you think of New York's decision?

Spelling

- Cuomo has signed a special uceextvie order
- The oedpercru for weddings under lockdown
- conducting the ceremony avulilytr
- would be legally nbingid
- lorieprtmay suspend ...
- a nsvprioio of law
- This was iolrvspyeu not recognised
- There is now no ecseux
- the only tele-conferencing mraolpft
- allow guests to tdeatn online
- Stay-at-home easmeusr
- eihggranst for events

Answers – Synonym Match

1. i	2. e	3. a	4. c	5. j
6. g	7. b	8. f	9. h	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Weddings

You think weddings are the best events. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their events aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least joyous of these (and why): birthdays, graduations or national day celebrations.

Role B – Birthdays

You think birthdays are the best events. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their events aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least joyous of these (and why): weddings, graduations or national day celebrations.

Role C – Graduations

You think graduations are the best events. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their events aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least joyous of these (and why): birthdays, weddings or national day celebrations.

Role D – National Day Celebrations

You think national day celebrations are the best events. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their events aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least joyous of these (and why): birthdays, graduations or weddings.

Speaking – Events

Rank these with your partner. Put the best events at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| • New Year parties | • weddings |
| • golden jubilees | • graduations |
| • children's parties | • birthdays |
| • retirement parties | • national day |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.